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# POLAND

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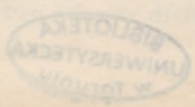
# FOUR FREEDOMS

### IV.

## Armed Forces in Poland



LONDON  
1946



## IV.—ARMED FORCES IN POLAND

### THE ARMY IN POLAND TO-DAY, OR THE SO-CALLED ZYMIELSKI'S ARMY

#### THE POLISH ARMY IN RUSSIA.

After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in 1941 and the signing of an Agreement between the Polish Government in London and the Soviet Union, a Polish Army on Russian soil, similar to that in France and Great Britain, was set up. This army was supposed to be joined by all Polish prisoners-of-war in Russia and by those civilians deported by the Russians from East and South Poland who, after two years' stay in Soviet concentration camps, still had the required physical standard.

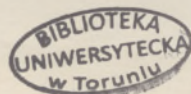
The Soviet Authorities, however, in spite of the obvious clarity of the Agreement, raised a number of difficulties from the very beginning and finally admitted only a part of the Poles from the prisoner-of-war and labour camps—so-called *Lagry*—to the recruiting points of the Polish Army. The Soviet Authorities claimed that only some categories of Poles could join the Army, raised difficulties in the provision of transport, and limited the food supply of that Army to several thousand rations per day, although the number of Poles deported from Poland to Russia was at that time about one million.

In 1942, facing ever-increasing obstacles and restrictions, the Polish divisions, under the command of General Anders, who had been appointed by General Sikorski, left Russia, in agreement with the Russian High Command and the Soviet political authorities, and went to Persia, Iraq and Palestine. Later they took part in the Italian campaign, covering themselves with glory in the battles of Monte Cassino, Bologna and Ancona.

#### RUSSIA ORGANISES HER OWN POLISH ARMY.

Almost immediately after the Polish divisions had left Russia, the Soviet Authorities started to organise the "other" Polish Army. Its nucleus was formed from those Poles who had previously been prevented from joining the real Polish Army and still remained in labour camps, and later from captured Polish conscripts in the German Army. For a long time this new army consisted of one division only. The soldiers, some N.C.O.'s and some of the junior officers were Poles, but all the senior officers and the majority of the junior ones were Russians detached from the Red Army. The only exception to this was the Commander of the Division Berling, a Pole who was nominated general by the Soviet Authorities. He was with this division on the eastern bank of the Vistula during the Warsaw Rising, and sent one of his battalions to help the fighting Underground Army. On the same day he was recalled from his post and replaced by a Red Army officer. Since then he has disappeared completely and, according to rumours, was shot in Moscow.

Later on a second division was formed under the command of a Soviet officer, Sawicki. Thus the "Polish" Army, incorporated in the Red Army, consisted of two infantry divisions. In 1944, when



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the Red Army entered Polish territory in pursuit of the Germans, the Soviet Authorities started mobilising the Polish population, putting some into the Red Army and some into a third division of the " Polish " Army. This division had the same proportion of Russian officers as the other two previously described.

Such were the origins of the present army in Poland. Its Polish elements consist of soldiers, some N.C.O.'s and junior officers who were either deported to Russia in 1939 and 1940, or were taken prisoner by the Russians when fighting as conscripts in the German Army, or were mobilised after the entry of the Red Army into Poland in 1944. They only form the mass of the troops, however, and are driven, controlled and ideologically educated by officers of the Red Army, who occupy all the more important positions. Those officers are either Russians or Russians of Polish descent, who have no ties with anything Polish, and very often cannot speak the Polish language. They are trained by the Communist Party, and the great majority of them belong to the N.K.V.D., the Russian equivalent of the German Gestapo. The general opinion in Poland, which is obviously correct, is that the present army in the country, though composed mainly of Poles, is not really Polish.

The Communists directing the so-called Warsaw Government—whose official name is the Provisional Government of National Unity—rely on the foreigner's ignorance of Polish affairs. They try to excuse the number of Russian officers in the Army by saying that Poland cannot provide her own, as they were either killed during the war or remain outside the country and refuse to return. That is why, they say, officers detached from the Red Army have to be appointed to so many key-posts. This is a lie. Several Polish generals, who are either in Poland or have expressed their wish to return immediately, have been waiting for months to be called to take up posts in the Army, which now consists of only eighteen divisions. Among those who are still waiting idly for posts are :

General Rummel, who commanded the defence of Warsaw in 1939 ;

General Boruta-Spiechowicz, former Commander of one of the divisions formed in Russia after the 1941 Agreement ;

General Gustaw Paszkiewicz ;

General Abraham ;

General Mond.

There are several dozen colonels, who have already returned to Poland from German prison camps, or who would return any day if there were a real Polish Army in the country. There are several hundred senior staff officers—Lieutenant-colonels, majors, captains—in a similar position. Some of them, it is true, have been posted to the " Polish " Army, as liaison officers between the Soviet Authorities and the headquarters of the Polish units. Some of them are used as interpreters, because the majority of the Russian Poles cannot understand Polish. A few have been posted as specialist lecturers to train N.C.O.s. The rest, however, wait helplessly.

The real cause of the preponderant role of Russians in the Polish Army is certainly not the lack of Polish officers. The " Polish " Army is no more than a unit of the Red Army, just as it was during the

hostilities. From the point of view of Soviet interests and security, this army cannot become too large, and must be controlled entirely by Russians in exactly the same way as all other Soviet units and formations.

The following list of the main military institutions and their staffs is the best illustration of this statement. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army is a Pole, Michal Lyzwinski, an officer who, before the war, was court-martialled and sentenced for financial frauds committed in the Army. He now uses the name Rola-Zymierski. In spite of his abysmal subservience to Soviet orders, however, he is always kept under thorough control. None of his orders or regulations can be issued without the counter-signature of the Soviet General Korczyc, Chief of the " Polish " General Staff, who, therefore, is in fact in command of all forces in the country. Zymierski's Deputy is also a Soviet general, Vsevolod Strazevski, " Polish " Vice-Minister of National Defence, an officer who came to Poland with the Red Army in 1944.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE " POLISH " ARMED FORCES.

The " Polish " Army is divided into two Army Corps, the third and fourth only having just been organised. A Soviet general, Poplawski, is in command of the first corps, and another, Swierczewski, of the second. The latter commanded the International Communist Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. Both are Soviet citizens of Polish descent.

Of the several dozen generals in the " Polish " Army, only eleven are Poles, and most of these are political generals, having been given this high military rank by Communist or extreme Left para-military organisations which existed beside the Polish Underground Army during the German occupation of the country. With one exception, none of them occupy positions of commanding officers or parallel functions.

The Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the " Polish " Army consists, among others, of the following officers of the Red Army : Russians dressed in Polish uniform :

General Korczyc—Chief of the General Staff.

General Polynin—Chief of the Air Force.

General Czerniavski—Chief of Artillery.

Lieutenant - General Vsevolod Strazevski — Vice - Minister of National Defence.

Lieutenant General Loginov—Chief Quartermaster.

Lieutenant-General Poltuzhytski—Inspector of Training.

Lieutenant-General Kienievich—Chief of the Internal Security Corps.

Lieutenant-General Kimbar—Commander of the 1st Armoured Corps.

Major-General Mogucny—Chief of the Health Department.

Major-General M. N. Kozusvko—Chief of Military Intelligence.

Brigadier W. Zlobin—Adviser to the Chief of Political Education.

Brigadier Savchenko—Deputy Quartermaster.

Brigadier Tichnov—Second-in-Command of the Air Force.



Brigadier Gromadin—Chief of the Armoured and Mechanised Forces.

Brigadier Mostovienko—Commander of the Armoured Forces.

Brigadier Yurin—Chief of the Signal Corps.

Brigadier Rumiantsev—Chief of the Transport Corps.

Brigadier Tarnavski—Chief of Military Jurisdiction.

Colonel Kushko—Deputy Chief of Political Education.

Colonel Krycki—Chief of the Personnel Department.

Colonel Chestepierov—Chief of the War Booty Department.

Colonel Pleshtchev—Deputy Chief of the War Booty Department.

Colonel Chvielov—Chief of the Supply Department.

Colonel Triakov—Chief of the Building and Billeting Department.

Colonel Poniedielnikov—1st Deputy to the Chief of Military Intelligence.

Colonel Tsukanov—2nd Deputy to the Chief of Military Intelligence.

Colonel Filatov—3rd Deputy to the Chief of Military Intelligence.

Lieutenant Colonel Lobanov—Military Prosecutor.

Lieutenant-Colonel Plaksiey—Commanding Officer of the Air Force Reserve Unit.

Major Faronov—Chief of the Coding Department.

From this list it will be seen that all the key positions are held exclusively by Soviet officers.

General Poltuzhytski, a high Red Army officer, is at the head of military training, with the title of Inspector. The Chief of the Staff College, where the lecturers are almost entirely Russians, is Lieutenant-Colonel Volynski, a former officer of the Red Army. At the Training Centre for Armoured Forces in Modlin, near Warsaw, all the instructors and commanders are entirely Russians. They control all stores and supplies. The Commanding Officer of the School is a Pole, Colonel Czerwinski.

Similarly the Department of Armament and Equipment is completely in Russian hands, though a Pole, the indolent General Jan Pyrski, is nominally in command. The real chief of the Department is a member of the N.K.V.D., a Russian colonel, Nikolas Maksimov, who speaks a little Polish, but badly and with much difficulty. A Soviet major, Mikolaj Prynikov, is in control of all stores of equipment and armaments belonging to this Department. Of course, both Maksimov and Prynikov wear the uniform of Polish officers.

The Chief of Staff of the 1st Armoured Corps is a Soviet officer in the uniform of a Polish major-general—Vladimir A. Zoravlenko. 70 per cent. of the officers of this corps are Russians. Only eleven Poles hold ranks higher than lieutenant.

The actual control of the Polish Navy is in the hands of the Deputy Chief of the Navy Department in the Ministry of National Defence, Commander Blomberg, an N.K.V.D. agent who never served in the Navy before and was never an officer.

The Air Force is also commanded by Soviet officers, with the Russian generals Polynin and Tielnov, at its head.

At the head of Military Intelligence is an officer of the Soviet Intelligence Service, who, before the war, used the names Timofeyev and Lieutenant Sadovski. He now appears as M. N. Kozushko, and has the rank of a Polish major-general. On account of their great importance to the Soviet Union, the Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence Services have been very carefully staffed by the Russians. The 1st Deputy to the Head of the Department which controls all concentration camps for the former members of the Polish Underground Army is a Soviet colonel, Poniedielnikov. The 2nd Deputy is a Soviet colonel, Tsukanov, and the 3rd Deputy, who directs Counter-Intelligence, is a Soviet colonel, Filatov.

Similarly the Political Department, which directs all actions inside the country, is in the hands of a Soviet major, Khorkhol. The Chief of the Coding Department, in which General Kozushko is particularly interested, is a Soviet major, Faronov. The Intelligence Service, following the Soviet model, has its own Prosecutor, Soviet Lieutenant-Colonel Lobanov, who directs the interrogation of the prisoners kept in the Intelligence Department's private gaols. One of these prisons is in the 11th November Street in the Praga District of Warsaw, and the other is in Cienista Street in the barracks of the 1st Squadron, also in the same district. The Intelligence Service very often makes political arrests, round-ups and searches of private houses on its own account, and has a specially detached squadron, very carefully chosen and commanded by Soviet Major S. N. Kozushko, brother of the Chief of Military Intelligence. Only one Pole is known to be working in the Intelligence—2nd-Lieutenant Konieczny—and all the others are Russians.

In Pruszkow, near Warsaw, there is a special camp for Polish officers returning from German prison camps. Here their ranks and past records are investigated and checked. The officer in command of this camp was a Soviet officer of the N.K.V.D., wearing the uniform of a Polish major-general, Konstanty Tielnov. His representatives in Katowice and Lignica are also Soviet officers, Shubich and Vasilenko. The Poles who conduct the investigations work under the control of two Soviet delegates, Colonel Antonov-Kozakov and Major Merezkov.

These examples, which only refer to the more important positions in the hierarchy of the "Polish" armed forces, plainly testify that this army is only a tool in the hands of the Soviet Authorities.

The Provisional Government in Warsaw is very fond of referring to the fact that, up to the 5th November, 1945, 4,000 Soviet officers and N.C.O.s have allegedly left Poland. These Russians had been employed as N.C.O. instructors and junior officers, and used to appear officially in Soviet uniform. The Government's communiques, however, do not mention the officers of the Red Army who wear Polish uniform and occupy, not positions of secondary importance, but the very highest ones. The communiques do not refer either to the notorious fact that the Soviet instructors officially withdrawn from the army were put into the Citizens' Militia and security offices, very often under changed names and usually in civilian clothes.

The organisation of the Polish armed forces is based on that of the Red Army, which undoubtedly simplifies the treatment of these units as integral parts of the Red Army. The biggest military unit



is an Army Corps, which is divided into divisions. A division consists of three infantry and one artillery regiments. The armoured forces, according to the Soviet example, are organised into a Corps consisting of brigades. Similarly the cavalry is made up of one division with three regiments. The Air Force has three regiments equipped only with Soviet aircraft. During hostilities those planes were modern ones—Yak I, Yak III, Yak VIIa, U.II, Stormovik, etc. Now, however, these have been withdrawn, and in their place the “Polish” Air Force is getting old Soviet machines, obsolete and no longer used by the Russians, such as TB 3, DE 6 and CKB 26.

A Corps of Internal Security has been created in Poland, similar to that existing in Russia—the special N.K.V.D. forces. Under the command of a Soviet officer of Polish descent, General Kienievich, this Corps is used to fight down the opposition to the Communist régime in Poland.

The Institution of Political Commissars, or so-called officers of political education, is unknown in any other army but the Soviet one. Such officers are attached to all units of the “Polish” forces, but not subordinated to the normal service hierarchy. Their organisation is independent and parallel to that of the army officers. At the head of it is the 1st Deputy to the Commander-in-Chief, General Spychalski, a Communist who controls all the widespread and carefully chosen apparatus of deputies to the commanders of divisions, regiments, battalions, squadrons and even platoons.

The duties of an officer of political education include :

- (a) Investigations among soldiers about their political loyalty to the Communist regime.
- (b) Control of the political loyalty and activities of the commanding officers.
- (c) The spreading of propaganda according to instructions received.
- (d) Informing the Security Authorities of every sign of an anti-Communist attitude among the soldiers.

With the exception of the officers of political education in platoons, whose secondary functions are sometimes entrusted to Poles trained by Soviet specialists, all the higher positions in this organisation are occupied by Russians. The only Polish candidates who are directed to the School for Officers of Political Education in Lodz are members of the Polish Workers' Party (Communist Party), whose loyalty is beyond the shadow of a doubt. The real *spiritus movens* of the organisation, besides Spychalski, whose function is mainly that of a figurehead, is Mr. Izaak Medres, who, under the pseudonym of Viktor Grosz, and in a general's uniform, is Deputy to the Chief of Political Education of the Polish Forces.

It can now be seen clearly that the Soviet Authorities have two methods of controlling the loyalty of the Polish soldiers, the first through the preponderance of Russian officers, and the second through their agents appointed as “Polish” officers of Political Education.

In this way the “Polish” forces are being controlled and made into an obedient tool in Soviet hands. In fact, therefore, Zymierski's Army is just an extension of the Red Army.

Another task is allotted by the Russians to these “Polish” forces : that of a school of Communism for the Polish youth, to demoralise and break the young generation psychologically, so that these young people will never disturb the leaders of the régime and their Moscow protectors by stiff patriotic opposition. Under the pretext of teaching the democratic way of thinking, discussions, talks and lectures are held in the forces to inoculate the theories of Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism to the compulsory listeners. They are taught to hate the West and the democratic Powers of the world, and are given explanations of the necessity of revolution and the liquidation of the so-called “possessing class” in every country. At the same time, more or less discreetly, a war between the Soviet Union and the Western World is predicted.

#### CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN THE “POLISH” FORCES.

The living conditions of the soldiers in units organised and educated according to Communist theories are very hard. The Training Division, which is stationed in Warsaw and usually used on official occasions to represent the Army, and the 11th, 12th and 13th Divisions and six infantry regiments are somewhat better uniformed and fed than the rest. With the exception of the Air Force and some Armoured Units, who receive American tinned meat, the army rations are insufficient and the uniforms poor and inadequate. The soldiers suffer from cold and hunger, and go almost barefooted. They are very often forced to depend on people's charity.

The Army in Poland to-day, which used to be the pride and joy of the nation, is now regarded more as a moveable concentration camp than as armed forces of the country. This change of the people's feelings was caused by the consciousness of serving in units dressed in Polish uniforms but under foreign command, according to foreign regulations and for foreign purposes. Another cause of this change of heart is the system of political education, linked with constant spying and investigation by political, security, intelligence and very often Soviet N.K.V.D. agents. The starvation rations and miserable conditions in the Army increase the feeling still further.

#### THE SOVIET ARMY ON POLISH SOIL.

Everybody who has had an opportunity lately of observing conditions in Poland agrees that Commissar Molotov's statement to the British Ambassador in Moscow that the Soviet forces have been withdrawn from Poland does not correspond with the truth. It is also untrue that small units of the Red Army have been grouped only along railway lines used by Soviet transport between Russia and the Russian zone in Germany.

On the contrary, it is a fact that the Soviet Army does still remain in Poland, and its garrisons are very often in places many miles from railway lines connecting the East and the West. Soviet officers and soldiers can still be seen in the streets of Cracow, Poznan, Katowice, Lodz and all the bigger Polish towns, with the possible exception of Warsaw. The behaviour and attitude of the Red Army soldiers and officers towards the Polish population has not changed in the least, and acts of violence, robberies, rapes and murders are still daily—or rather nightly—occurrences.



The argument used to explain to the West the continued presence of the Red Army in Poland contradicts the meaning of Polish independence and also Stalin's promises made at Potsdam. This argument refers to the decision of the Warsaw Government, by which the Red Army was invited into Poland to round up its deserters. As a result the Red Army is staying in Polish territory and living on the population. All reproaches about the presence and behaviour of the Soviet officers and men are brushed aside because Poland is herself supposed to have wanted such a state of affairs. No particular knowledge of the politics and diplomatic affairs of Central and Eastern Europe is needed to see through this argument. In 1944 the Soviet Authorities installed the so-called Committee of National Liberation in Lublin, composed entirely of their own agents, and recognised this Committee as the Polish Government. Under Pressure from Great Britain, this Committee was broadened by the addition of three men, so that, of its twenty members, seventeen were Soviet agents. Those agents passed a resolution in November, 1945, inviting the Red Army to stay in Poland. This invitation is now used as the pretext for regarding present conditions as "willed by the Polish people."

Even if it were true that the Soviet units were needed in Poland to round up their deserters, this action cannot last indefinitely. A vicious circle has been set up, because the Soviet units which return to Russia always leave deserters behind, and so another unit has to be sent to round them up. This in turn leaves another batch of deserters, and so on.

The relaxation of discipline in the Soviet units stationed in Poland is very noticeable. Absence without leave is normal and frequent. Drunkenness is equally common among soldiers and officers.

At the end of August, 1945, a few large Soviet units were transferred to Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary, and at this time considerable bands of deserters and men who had lost their units and dared not return for fear of the N.K.V.D. started ravaging the country.

Nobody, of course, would believe that the Soviet Army, which fought so magnificently against the Germans, showing such great skill and excellent organisation, really needs weeks or even months to cope with the problem of her own deserters. Soviet Russia requires a pretext for keeping her Army in Poland. If she really wished to solve the problem of her deserters, who are still causing a lot of trouble in Poland, she could have done so within a few weeks by using her experienced methods. Russia knows that the West will be willing to believe any argument she produces, even though it may be a naive and illogical one.

#### THE RED ARMY AND ELECTIONS IN POLAND.

Elections will have to be held in Poland.

Poland belongs to the group of States occupied by Russia, which, like Bulgaria and Jugoslavia, have to be ruled by Communists. Free democratic elections would bring complete disaster to Communist hopes, and the Polish Communists and Soviet Authorities realise that they might, at best, receive 2 to 3 per cent. of the votes. On the other hand, elections organised under Soviet bayonets, elections with the prospect of a Communist *coup d'etat*, supported, like the "Democrats"

in Persia, by the occupying Soviet Army, elections under terror and pressure will produce another argument to convince the West that the situation in Poland is "in accordance with the will of the people." That is why the Red Army is needed in Poland.

#### THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE RED ARMY OFFICERS AND MEN.

There are hundreds of thousands of people in Poland who have been robbed, raped and infected with venereal diseases, who can bear witness to the behaviour of the Red Army. There is no need to search for proofs, because such people can be met with every day in every part of the country.

One morning in the park in Cracow, eight Polish corpses were found of people shot, after having refused to surrender their watches and clothes to Russian soldiers. The other day, in Bytom, four women were found, murdered with a pistol-butt, and stripped of all their possessions. Bestial rapes of one woman by ten to twenty soldiers are daily incidents.

The Red Cross Centres are crowded with girls and women begging for help after having been raped by Russian soldiers. In September, 1945, the Red Cross Centre in Warsaw registered several dozen women daily, applying for help after rapes. On some days the doctors at the Centre in Bialystok attended as many as 250 women infected with syphilis, the majority of whom had also been badly beaten and some pregnant. Centres in Poznan, Gdansk, Gdynia, Bydgoszcz and Lodz are unable to cope with the number of cases. The patients attending these centres only represent a small proportion of those in need of treatment.

How many have been murdered after being raped? How many died from exhaustion? How many committed suicide as the result of nervous breakdowns and the consciousness of hated pregnancy?

#### THE LOOTING OF POLAND BY THE RED ARMY.

Polish property, robbed from every part of the country, is being carried off to Russia by road and rail. Machinery and factory equipment of every description is being officially exported by order of the Soviet Authorities. Besides that, practically everything which has any value in the eyes of a Soviet Commander or Commissar shares the same fate privately and unofficially: furniture, clothes, bicycles, watches, clocks, typewriters, and so on. "Poland was liberated by the Red Army, and therefore Soviet soldiers have full right to get their reward from the country." That is the slogan heard everywhere.

There is no difficulty in finding proofs of this. Poland is full of them. The difficulty is, however, to find people outside the country who will agree to see them, listen to them and afterwards tell the world the obvious truth about Poland—that she is under the occupation of the Soviet Army and that its attitude towards the population is that of a conqueror to the conquered.

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